



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231
www.uspto.gov

| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/029,057 | 12/20/2001 | Duane W. Buckingham | INC-0001 | 3599 |

23413 7590 03/13/2003

CANTOR COLBURN, LLP
55 GRIFFIN ROAD SOUTH
BLOOMFIELD, CT 06002

EXAMINER

NGUYEN, HUNG T

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2632

DATE MAILED: 03/13/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.
10/029,057

Applicant(s)
Buckingham et al.

Examiner
HUNG NGUYEN

Art Unit
2632



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Dec 20, 2001
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-35 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-35 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on Dec 20, 2001 is/are a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). 4 6) ☐ Other:

Art Unit: 2632

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawing are objected to under 37 CFR 1.84 (o) which requires legends on drawings:
-- In Fig.11, all numeric blocks 30, 32, 36, 50, 52, 54 & 56 need to be labeled with descriptive labels (e.g., button, speaker, connectors etc). Correction is required .

Claim Objections

2. Claims 24-27 are objected to because of the following informalities:

Regarding claims 24 & 26, "DND" before "legend" must be spelled out ;

Regarding claims 25 & 27, "MUR" before "LED" must be spelled out .

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

Art Unit: 2632

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wagner et al. (U.S. 6,236,303) in view of Winston (U.S. 3,964,058).

Regarding claim 1, Wagner discloses a system for indicating the status of hotel or similar room for audio annunciation of a visitor to an occupant of a room in a multiple room building, the system configured to indicate a status (30) of the room to the visitor [figs.1-3, col.2, lines 14-21 , col.6, lines 4-15 and lines 29-38] comprising:

- a switch assembly (10,12) configured to convey a message outside of the room / the switch assembly (12) operable from inside the room [figs.1-3, col.2, lines 23-31 and col.3, lines 31-67];
- an indicating assembly (30) in operable communication with the switch assembly, the indicating assembly configured to indicate the message when the message is selected, the message viewable from inside and outside of the room [fig.2, col.2, lines 14-21 and col.3, lines 54-67, col.6, lines 4-14].

Wagner fails to specifically mention a doorbell button in operable communication with a doorbell chime, the doorbell button operably connected with the indicating assembly and operable from outside of the room by the visitor.

Art Unit: 2632

Doorbell is a bell , chime or buzzer mounted outside a door that is rung to announce the present of a visitor or caller .

Winston teaches a technique of using doorbell buttons (15,19) in operable communication with a doorbell chime (13) from outside of the room by the visitor to the occupant of the room and the occupant may inform callers that he or she is busy and does not wish to contact with message of “DO NOT DISTURB” with light (25) except in the event of an emergency is controlled by a control switch (31) [figs.1-2, col.1, lines 22-44 and col.2, lines 1-58]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to employ the system of Wagner as taught by Winston for providing a tone signal to the occupant of the room when the doorbell button is pressed from outside of the room for announcing the present of a visitor or caller .

Regarding claim 2, Wagner discloses the switch assembly (10,12) is mounted to an interior wall of the room [figs.1, 3, col.2, lines 23-31 and col.3, lines 34-37].

Regarding claim 3, Wagner discloses the indicating assembly (30) is mounted within the interior of a hotel [figs.2-3, col.2, lines 14-21].

Regarding claim 4, Wagner discloses the switch assembly (10,12) includes a switchable between a first “off” position, a first “on” position representing the message that the occupant does not

Art Unit: 2632

wish to be disturbed, and a second 'on' position representing the message that the occupant wishes to have hotel housekeeping staff make up the hotel room [col.2, lines 46-50].

Regarding claim 5, Wagner discloses the switch assembly (10,12) includes a switchable to a position indicating messages that the room is available for occupancy / "ready for occupancy" [fig.3, col.2, lines 58-60 and col.3, line 63 to col.4, line 3].

Regarding claim 6, Wagner discloses the switch assembly (10,12) provides a textual or symbolic representation of the message associated with each of these switch positions [fig.3, col.2, lines 50-53 and col.3, lines 53-62].

Regarding claim 7, Wagner discloses the message comprises a plurality of message indicators includes red (32), green (34) lights [col.2, lines 54-60 and col.3, lines 18-29].

Regarding claim 8, Wagner discloses the switch assembly (12) includes the one and the another of message indicators for clearly indicating a message selected by the occupant [col.2, lines 54-60].

Regarding claim 9, Wagner discloses the indicating assembly (30) provides a textual or symbolic representation of the message associated with each of the message indicators [fig.3, col.2, lines 50-53 and col.3, lines 58-67].

Art Unit: 2632

Regarding claim 10, Wagner discloses the system may be electrically connected and the system may power by the batteries (50) or wired into the hotel's electrical system [col.2, lines 43-45 and col.4, lines 13-16].

Regarding claim 11, Winston discloses the doorbell chime (13) includes a speaker for audio output [fig.1, col.2, lines 1-15 and lines 37-40].

Regarding claim 12, Wagner discloses the multiple room building comprises a hotel and the occupant is a hotel guest [fig.3, col.2, lines 32-42 , col.3, lines 19-23 and abstract].

Regarding claim 13, Wagner discloses the indicating assembly (30) may be actuated remotely [fig.3, col.2, lines 61-63 , col.5, lines 4-12 and abstract].

Regarding claim 14, Wagner discloses the system comprising a microprocessor (52) in operable communication with the switch assembly [col.5, lines 21-25].

Regarding claim 15, Wagner discloses the microprocessor (52) is operably connected with an external device for monitoring security features [col.5, lines 21-56].

Art Unit: 2632

Regarding claims 16, 19-20, Wagner discloses the indicating assembly (30) comprises a discrete display (22,24) and a discrete switch (10,12) for indicating / determining a condition of the room the room is available for occupancy / “ready for occupancy” / a room is clean [fig.3, col.2, lines 58-60 and col.3, line 63 to col.4, line 3].

Regarding claims 17-18, Wagner discloses the microprocessor (52) to control the switch assembly (10,12) for detecting an intrusion / theft to enter the hotel room by a motion sensor / setting the timing means (58) [col.5, lines 25-64].

Regarding claims 21-23, Wagner discloses the switch (10,12) can be any type for indicating and determining the condition of occupant with blinking lights option [col.3, line 53 to col.4, line 3, col.4, lines 18-43, col.5, lines 20-55 and col.6, lines 4-24].

Regarding claims 24-27, Wagner discloses the indicating assembly (30) can be operated by the occupant of the room for displaying messages such as “do not disturb”(22) with a red light (32), “maid service”(24) with a green light (34) or other desired messages could be used “ ready for occupant” , “emergency help needed” or “clean up” [figs.3-4, col.3, line 53 to col.4, line 52 and col.5, lines 20-25].

Art Unit: 2632

Regarding claims 28-29, Wagner discloses the microprocessor (52) is operably connected with the switch assembly (30) and in a centrally controlled system for monitoring security features [col.5, lines 21-56].

Regarding claims 30-31, Wagner discloses the microprocessor (52) is operably connected with an external device for monitoring security features such as intrusion / theft by activated the proximity switch or motion sensor [col.5, lines 21-56].

Regarding claims 32-33, Wagner discloses the message selected by the switch assembly (12) is convey to a location remote [fig.3, col.2, lines 58-60 , col.5, lines 4-12 and abstract].

Regarding claim 34, Winston discloses the doorbell chime (13) can be turned off by the control switch (31) [col.2, lines 41-44].

Regarding claim 35, Wagner discloses a communication system can be connected from the occupant of the room and the remote location for communicating may include a telephone is controlled by the microprocessor (52) [col.2, lines 61-63 col.3, lines 34-44 and col.5, lines 4-25].

Art Unit: 2632

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

- Levinston et al. (U.S. 4,523,193) Remote-controlled doorbell signal receiver .
- Vories et al. (U.S. 5,861,806) Occupied room indicator .
- Thacker (U.S. 6,359,564) Occupancy status indicator .
- Angott et al (U.S. 6,414,589) Apparatus for remotely controlling auxiliary doorbell chime from doorbell push button .


6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hung T. Nguyen whose telephone number is (703) 308-6796. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday from 8:00am to 5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's acting supervisor, Daniel Wu can be reached on (703) 308-6730. The fax phone number for this Group is (703) 872-9314.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-4700.

Examiner: Hung T. Nguyen

Date: March 6, 2003


DANIEL J. WU
PRIMARY EXAMINER 3/9/03